

# High-Speed Rail in Syracuse

## **Why Do We Need High-Speed Rail?**

**According to a recent memo from the Progressive Policy Institute:**

- High-speed rail will create hundreds of thousands of well-paid jobs. By some measures, every \$1 billion spent in high-speed rail construction will create 15,000 direct jobs-and tens of thousand more will grow from operating and maintaining the train system. These are jobs that cannot be outsourced.
- High-speed rail makes economic sense. The United States population will increase from 300 million to more than 390 million by mid-century. Those citizens will need transportation, and high-speed rail is cheaper to build and causes much less environmental damage than new highways and airports.
- High-speed rail has a proven record of economic development. With station stops located every 30 or 40 miles between terminals, high-speed rail has spurred growth in rural France and Spain. Fast, efficient transportation could bring similar benefits to economically depressed Main Street.
- High-speed rail is a big step toward energy independence. Present day diesel powered trains use 27 percent less energy per passenger mile than cars and 21 percent less than airplanes, according the Oak Ridge National Laboratory. If high-speed rail corridors were operated with nonpolluting electric locomotives, they could reduce carbon dioxide emissions by as much as six billion pounds annually, according to the Center for Clean Air Policy.
- High-Speed rail is almost infinitely expansible. A double track railway, once in place, can meet heavy traffic needs with no additional capital expenditures except more trainsets. Highways and airports, on the other hand, require more lanes, and runways to accommodate greater traffic loads

The United States Department of Transportation [reported](#) that an investment in public transportation creates almost 20 percent more jobs than the same investment in building roads or highways.

## **High-Speed Rail: A Benefit for Syracuse**

- High-Speed Rail gives Central New Yorkers, in particular, more easily accessible destinations. Buffalo and Rochester to the West, Utica, Albany and NY City to the East.
- In the Syracuse metropolitan area an estimated 1,300 individuals are employed in businesses that provide services to the rail industry. They include everything from ball bearings and hydraulic control mechanisms to engineering and environmental services. Direct investment in passenger and freight rail infrastructure could have an impact on our local businesses in this sector.
- The Syracuse area's colleges and universities teach over 130,000 students. High-speed rail will give them the opportunity to easily travel to internships and employment opportunities in other Upstate cities.
- It also gives schools such as Syracuse University, Le Moyne College and SUNY ESF, Upstate Medical University, Oswego, and Morrisville a powerful recruiting tool -- prospective students across NY will have greater access to their schools.
- Like Rochester, Syracuse has a great medical industry. Intercommutability for medical care and educational purposes will configure a new service area for patients seeking healthcare services based in Syracuse and Rochester.
- High-speed rail provides a clear benefit to Syracuse's hospitality and tourism industry already one of the largest sectors in the local regional economy. In Onondaga County alone visitor spending totaled in excess of \$775 million in 2008. For the entire metropolitan area visitor spending was just under \$ 1 billion dollars in 2008, this is an increase of around 3% over 2007.